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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/796,676	03/09/2004	Carl D. Fuemmeler	MEPC 8636 U1	2630
1688	7590	01/30/2006	EXAMINER	
POLSTER, LIEDER, WOODRUFF & LUCCHESI 12412 POWERS COURT DRIVE SUITE 200 ST. LOUIS, MO 63131-3615			GEHMAN, BRYON P	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3728	

DATE MAILED: 01/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/796,676

Applicant(s)

FUEMMELE, CARL D.

Examiner

Bryon P. Gehman

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 December 2005.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-13 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☒ Claim(s) 7-9 and 13 is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 4-6 and 10-12 is/are rejected.
7) ☒ Claim(s) 10-12 is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1, 4-6 and 10-12 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claim 1, lines 9-10, "the spacing between the end stringers and the midpoint stringers" is indefinite, as multiple such stringers define multiple possible spacings when not all are meant, and the stringers adjacent the midpoint are not "midpoint stringers", as such would be at the midpoint. The language is suggested to be --the spacing between each end stringer and its adjacent stringer adjacent the midpoint in the same plane--. In lines 10-11, "the midpoint stringers" should again be --stringers adjacent the midpoint in the same plane--. In line 14, "symmetrical in all directions" is inaccurate, as such would define a cube shape for equality in three dimensions. The pallet is not in a cube shape.

In claims 10 and 11, line 2 of each, "pallet combinations" and "paperboard containers" lack antecedent for plurality.

In claim 12, line 2, "the intermediate stringers" is indefinite, as various spaces occur between various end and intermediate stringers. To be definite, the phrase should be --their adjacent intermediate stringer in the same plane--.

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1 and 4-6 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over De Pew et al. ('935). De Pew et al. disclose a pallet comprising four longitudinal top stringers (4-4-4-4), three transverse ribs (1-2-3), and four longitudinal bottom stringers (5-5-5-5), two of the top and bottom stringers being located opposite each other at the ends of the transverse ribs (either pair of opposed outer top and bottom stringers) and two other top and bottom stringers located opposite each other on the ribs intermediate the ends of the ribs (4 and 5 and 4' and 5'). To remove the top stringers of De Pew et al. intermediate the stringers adjacent the midpoint and the end stringers would have been obvious, as removal of a part and its function has long been held to have been obvious (See *In re Kuhle*, 526 F.2d 553, 188 USPQ 7 (CCPA 1975) (deleting a prior art switch member and thereby eliminating its function was an obvious expedient)), and would define aligned and co-extensive top and bottom openings, the stringers and ribs having substantially the same length so as to define a square pallet, the removal of the stringers still allowing securement of appropriately sized items to the pallet.

As to claim 4, De Pew et al. shows the widths of the stringers and the ribs as being similar or substantially the same. To provide them exactly the same would fail to provide any new and unexpected result by such a provision.

As to claim 5, De Pew et al. disclose the widths of the stringers and ribs to be greater than the thickness of the stringers or the ribs.

As to claim 6, see Figure 1.

5. Applicant's arguments filed December 30, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. While applicant's arguments are persuasive where the pallet is employed in combination with the rolls of film to accommodate the core ends, it is maintained to merely provide a known pallet (De Pew et al.) with fewer stringers would have been obvious so as to require less material while still providing support for appropriately sized contents.

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the

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shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

7. Claims 7-9 and 13 are allowed.

8. Claims 10-12 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Yerkey et al. discloses a pallet for receiving annular articles.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bryon P. Gehman whose telephone number is (571) 272-4555. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Wednesday from 5:30am to 6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey Yu, can be reached on (571) 272-4562. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

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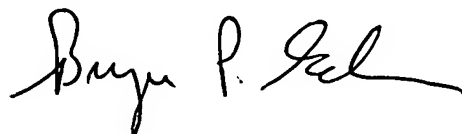
published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should

you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryon P. Gehman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bryon" being more prominent than the last name "Gehman".

Bryon P. Gehman
Primary Examiner
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BPG